

INFORMATION

New Vaccination Certificates Issued For International Travel

A NEW "International Certificates of Vaccination" form has been issued by the U. S. Public Health Service and has been in use since July 14. This new official record of a traveler's compliance with immunization requirements supersedes the old "International Certificate of Inoculation and Vaccination." The old form, however, is valid until the expiration date of the recorded vaccinations. Like the old form, the new one provides space for certificates of smallpox, yellow fever, and cholera vaccinations, as well as space for recording other immunizations such as for typhus, typhoid-paratyphoid, plague, and tetanus, which are not at present required. The new form is issued to the traveler at the time of application for a passport at the offices of the Clerks of the Court and Passport Agencies of the Department of State located in Boston, Chicago, New Orleans, New York and San Francisco. This gives the traveler more time for completion of his immunizations than he had with the old form which he received at the time of passport issuance. Persons going into countries that do not require a passport may obtain the form from local or state health departments or from facilities of the Public Health Service.

Health departments, travel agencies and others who desire a supply of the certificates may obtain them, as in the past, from the Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C., at a cost of 5 cents per copy or \$2.50 per 100.

The new vaccination certificate form complies with the International Sanitary Regulations which went into effect in October, 1952, is recognized by all the countries governed by these regulations, and is approved by the World Health Organization. The text of the certificate is in English and French but data may be recorded in any language.

All changes from the old form work to the convenience of travelers. The principal ones are:

The cholera certificate becomes valid beginning six days after the first injection or immediately in the case of revaccination. The old form required that the series be completed. (The type of vaccine being used in this country provides maximum protection only after the second injection, so interna-

tional travelers will be advised to complete the series.)

The smallpox certificate becomes valid immediately on revaccination, whereas previously a 14-day wait was required. Primary vaccinations must still be inspected and the results recorded.

Smallpox and cholera vaccination certificates will be certified by local health officers as in the past, but the signature of the certifying officer is no longer necessary, and signature alone is not acceptable. Health officers must use their official stamps; if they do not have one they should prepare a special stamp for the purpose of certifying these documents.

The period of validity for the yellow fever vaccination certificate has been extended from four to six years. As before, yellow fever vaccination certificates issued in the United States are valid in international travel only when the inoculation is obtained from a vaccination center designated by the Public Health Service.

IMMUNIZATION PROCEDURES IN EFFECT IN THE PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

The following persons may be immunized without cost at Public Health Service stations:

1. Persons who by law are beneficiaries of the Public Health Service. This includes American seamen, members of the U. S. Coast Guard and their dependents, and certain other classes of beneficiaries entitled by law to the benefits of the Public Health Service. It does not include veterans, per se—that is, the fact that an applicant is a veteran does not in itself make him eligible for this service.

2. United States Government officers, employees, and their dependents leaving for foreign areas when traveling under official orders.

3. Dependents of Army, Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps personnel traveling under official orders to foreign countries.

4. Any person requiring immunization for yellow fever. (Yellow fever immunizations are obtainable only at Public Health Service stations.)

Persons entitled to immunization (other than yellow fever) by this Service may be furnished any of the usual immunizations. Members of the general public who receive yellow fever inoculations here are not entitled to other immunizations by this Service. Such immunizations (for example, typhoid, smallpox) should be obtained elsewhere. Persons not eligible as above may obtain immunization against diseases other than yellow fever from:

1. State or local health departments, or

2. A private physician. Such immunizations should be certified to by the *local* health authority that has jurisdiction over the area *where the private physician practices*.